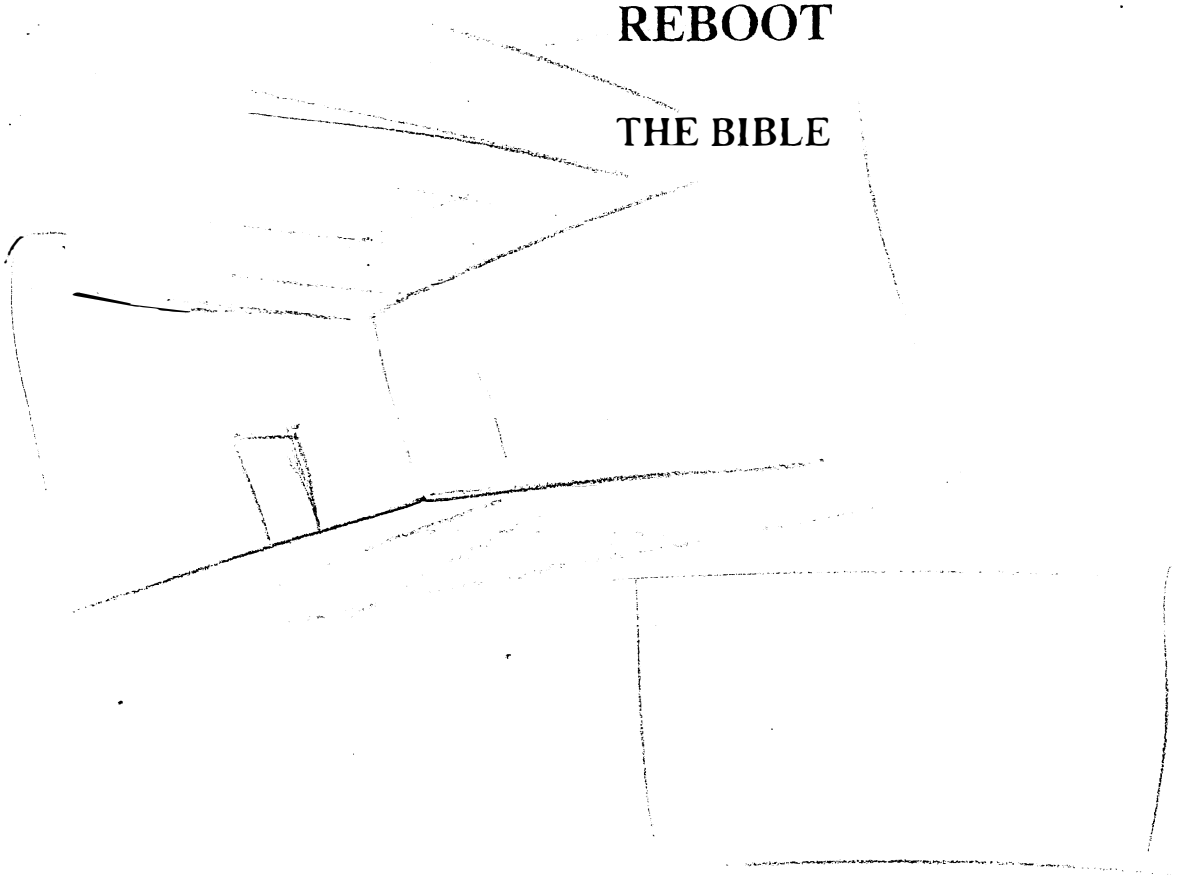
Greg Gibbons

REBOOT

THE BIBLE



LIMELIGHT PRODUCTIONS

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REBOOT

The Basic Concept

Ever wonder how a computer really works? What happens when you turn on the power and boot up? Well, don't ask me -- I'm just a writer.

The person to ask is **BOB.** Bob knows because he lives inside your PC, in the magical city that comes to life when you turn on the switch and electrical impulses surge through all those microchips and what-not. The city is called **MAINFRAME**, and it's a bustling super-high-tech metropolis filled with computer Sprites just like Bob. Well, sort of like Bob. You see, Bob is from The Super Computer, and he's stranded in Mainframe waiting for a chance to modem home.

Being different makes life tough for Bob, especially when he's trying to get a date with **DOT**, who runs the diner with the best chips in Mainframe, or when he's trying to get along with his boss, a computer virus named **MEGABYTE**, who likes to crunch anybody who doesn't do what he says, preferably before he says it. Worst of all, Megabyte is always scheming to get Bob to take him back to The Super Computer, so he can take it over and run it the same ruthless way he runs Mainframe. It's enough to pixel your nodes.

Being different also gives Bob an edge in dealing with Mainframe's other big threat, a series of recurring disasters that can strike anywhere, anytime, bringing danger and destruction to entire sectors of the city... Computer Games! (*gasp*) The Games descend from the "sky" in an ominous dark cube, taking over a whole sector of Mainframe and forcing the Sprites trapped inside to battle alien invaders, demonic hedgehogs, jet planes, tanks, ninjas, dragons, NBA All-Stars, devastating fastball pitchers, dots with insatiable appetites, and little Italian guys with big mustaches.

It isn't easy being a hero, especially in --

MAINFRAME

The World of REBOOT

All right, so it isn't really a mainframe computer, just a desktop PC. Tell that to Megabyte: he's the one who named the city Mainframe, to make it -- and himself -- sound more important.

Of course, the name doesn't mean anything special to the Sprites who live there. They don't even know they're inside a computer. They have no idea that the vast metropolis they live in has only one purpose: to process information fed into it by **THE USER**, the human being outside the computer.

Whenever you boot up your computer, millions of **COMPUTER SPRITES** come to life and go to work. Simple **BINOMES**, little robotic-looking 0's and 1's, do the actual physical labor of crunching numbers (with bulldozers), adding huge columns of figures (by making big groups and counting heads), creating graphics (with paint brushes and rollers), and processing words (in a gigantic warehouse where letters hang from hooks like carcasses in a meat-packing plant). More advanced **DATA SPRITES** occupy mid-level management jobs and run the shops and restaurants and computer trains that keep the city functioning. Sprites called **2-Ds** have flat two-dimensional bodies and even narrower one-dimensional minds.

Mainframe is a multi-level city of the future. The highest levels are dominated by giant capacitowers, one in each sector of the city. The middle levels are a bewildering, life-threatening tangle of high-speed transportation: trains, planes, automobiles, buses, go-sub taxis, and high-speed moving sidewalks called translators, all frantically hurrying in different directions. The lower levels are dark, grim, dirty, industrial, and practically deserted -- at least there's no one there you'd want to meet.

The lowest of the low are the "off-line" sectors, areas of Mainframe that have been damaged by electronic malfunctions or collisions with dust particles (as gigantic and destructive as meteors). When a sector goes off-line, it sinks in on itself and becomes a giant dead hole. Inside that hole dwell the former Sprites who were caught in the sector when it went off-line, now "nullified," turned into disgusting little energy-eating slugs called NULLS. Nulls eat energy and anything made of energy -- which means everything in Mainframe, from buildings to people. And sometimes they slither out of the off-line sectors into other parts of Mainframe,

infesting the city like voracious rats or giant termites. No wonder Bob can't stand them.

Mainframe is virtually infinite in size. Whole worlds can exist within the computer: great oceans (the A Sea and the D Sea), vast wastelands, towering mountains. Yet at the same time, the setting remains urban and high tech. The oceans are ponds in an enormous city park, the wastelands vacant lots hundreds of "miles" across, the mountains scrap heaps of old data waiting to be re-used.

There are also completely bizarre parts of Mainframe, computerized Twilight Zones: different directories where the normal rules of logic may not apply, floppy disks where a person can be lost forever, mysterious boards where even memory itself is volatile.

But the hard-working Sprites who live in Mainframe lead "normal" lives -- ordinary lives comically skewed to fit the special world of the computer, the way the "Jetsons" used the world of tomorrow or the "Flintstones" the prehistoric world of dinosaurs. At least their lives *seem* normal, until they're attacked by --

THE GAMES

Computer Games are as real as anything else that happens in Mainframe. To the people who live there, a Game is a natural disaster, potentially as destructive as a hurricane or an earthquake. Games appear unexpectedly, taking over a whole sector of the city, trapping everyone inside. Inside a Game sector, you have two choices. You can touch the emblem on your clothing (everyone has one) and say the command "Reboot," and the Game program immediately gives you the suit of armor, jet fighter, Grand Prix race car, football uniform, or ninja outfit you need to become a part of the Game. Or you can flee in terror, and hope nobody stomps you flat, gobbles you up, zaps you into oblivion, or, worst of all, forces you to play golf. But the one thing you can't do is escape. Once a Game is in progress, no one can get in or out of the Game sector until it's over.

When the Game is over, the sector returns to normal -- except that everything that was damaged in the Game, from buildings to Sprites, is still damaged. Scrap and salvage programs move in to bulldoze shattered buildings and clear away debris. Diagnostic programs (what we would call doctors) repair injured Sprites with bandages and splints, and counsel them about dealing with Game-related stress and post-Game trauma.

Our hero, Bob, knows the truth about computers and tries to explain that Games were created for the entertainment of a bizarre sub-species of undersized Users called "kids." But the other Mainframers don't believe him. Though they sometimes find themselves enjoying the excitement of the Games, especially when they're winning, they can't believe anyone would entrust such enormous power to a child.

THE USER

We never see The User -- because it's *you*, and you don't have a SAG card. In fact, we never go outside Mainframe, unless it's into another computer or a computer-related piece of hardware: printers, modems, disks, etc. Our characters can't interact directly with human beings, because they simply don't exist outside of electronic devices.

Also, compared to computer Sprites, human beings are incredibly huge and incredibly slow. For one of our characters, communicating with a human being would be like having a conversation with Mount Rushmore.

THE SUPER COMPUTER

Bob's Origin

One day the User hacked into a *real* mainframe, the giant research computer at a major university. Mainframe's modem port opened, and Megabyte saw an amazing new world at the far end of the electrical cable "tunnel." An azure sky filled with billowing clouds, where Sprites shoot effortlessly across vast expanses, traveling on lightning-bolt electrical currents... It was The Super Computer -- a new world for Megabyte to conquer.

Megabyte stuffed his all-important files in a suitcase and raced for the port. But as he started through, he collided headlong with Bob. Megabyte ordered his henchmen, Hack and Slash, to grab Bob and give him the boot. Then he started through the port again. But as soon as he entered it, he was scanned by a laser, and a huge metal door slammed shut in front of him, blocking his way to The Super Computer. Only then did Megabyte realize that Bob was the Guardian program who controlled access to the computer.

Megabyte tracked Bob down, only to find that Bob had entered a Game sector to help the Sprites trapped inside. By the time the Game was over, the modem port had closed, and Bob was stranded in Mainframe.

Pretending sympathy to Bob's plight, Megabyte assigned him a job as his own "head of security" -- which turned out to be a humiliating position as doorman and elevator operator at Megabyte's headquarters. Megabyte wanted Bob close at hand the next time the port opens. But Bob saw through the feigned friendship. Because of his job with the Super Computer Port Authority, Bob knows a virus when he sees one. And he knows that Megabyte, being a virus, can't resist the temptation to invade and take over another computer -- especially one as big and powerful as The Super Computer.

Bob began a new life in the strange environment of Mainframe, as a humble doorman and unsung Games champion, secretly determined to prevent Megabyte from ever getting through the portal and into the Super Computer, but also anxious to find a way to get home himself some day.

THE CHARACTERS

All our characters are computer Sprites, microscopic bundles of electrical impulses. But within the world of Mainframe, they're completely human, with a full range of emotions and expressions. (Well, Hack and Slash aren't exactly human, but they're too stupid to know it.) However, because they're generated within a computer, each of our characters has a "function" "programmed" into him, a single purpose or over-riding interest in life that can't be changed or ignored, a shorthand way of saying what a character is. In Mainframe, you don't say "know thyself" -- you say "get with your program."

BOB

In The Super Computer, Bob was a Guardian assigned to the job of chief of protocol for the Port Authority: no one could get into the computer unless Bob "prompted" him through. But here in Mainframe, Bob is Clark Kent, an unsung superhero with special powers.

Everything about The Super Computer was faster than Mainframe, including Bob. In Mainframe, this translates into non-stop energy: he's always doing something, always talking, always moving. Though he isn't intellectually superior to Dot or Megabyte, Bob has a quicker wit than the inhabitants of Mainframe, so that he's always making jokes that they don't quite get. (Bob also sometimes gets an irresistible electrical impulse to play practical jokes, the result of an accidental pixel shock in The Super Computer.) Most important of all, Bob has the ability to move with "supercool" speed for short periods of time. But since the PC containing Mainframe isn't supercooled like The Super Computer was, moving that fast leaves Bob over-heated: exhausted, drained of energy, and fiery red. Despite his unique powers, Bob is far from invincible.

While working for The Super Computer Port Authority, Bob acquired a weird little device called **GLITCH.** Glitch is a sort of computerized Swiss Army knife: it can change into whatever small object Bob needs to help him out of a jam (but Glitch has a mind of its own, and doesn't always turn into what Bob *wants*). Glitch can be a buzzsaw, a stethoscope, an umbrella, a can-opener, a hand-held x-ray machine -- in short, anything. And when all else fails, Bob can simply throw Glitch at a source of danger. This releases all of Glitch's functions at once, which makes everything around it go temporarily haywire. But this is definitely a last resort: it's an ability that can't be

controlled or even aimed very well. Sometimes it makes the situation even worse.

There's a part of Bob that enjoys taking part in a Game or out-witting Megabyte: the brash, self-confident, mischievous, "hot-dogging" side of his personality. But though he can't resist showboating every now and then, at heart Bob is an ordinary working Sprite, with ordinary problems (ordinary within the unique world of Mainframe). He has an easy-going, fun-loving approach to life, with no driving ambition like Megabyte's lust for power. It doesn't even bother him that nobody realizes how important and heroic he really is (though it might be nice if he could impress Dot). He'd just like to do his job well, enjoy his down-time, have a little fun, and maybe someday meet Ms. Right and settle down and co-process a family.

As a Guardian, Bob's "function" is to help Sprites in trouble, to fight for the underdog, to save the world. It just doesn't occur to him to do anything else. In fact, it comes so naturally, that it doesn't seem heroic or special to him.

Bob is a "normal" guy who does heroic things.

MEGABYTE

Megabyte is a virus created by a mischievous computer hacker. He "invaded" Mainframe by stealth, attached to an innocent word processing program. But because Mainframe is a computer and not a real city, Megabyte didn't have to conquer the place with armies and battles. What makes Megabyte so insidious, is that he has the computer "credentials" of a real command program -- a perfect disguise. As soon as he showed up, everyone immediately thought he was supposed to be in charge.

Megabyte has taken the place of the command.com, the program that runs the computer. As the new command.com, Megabyte has a variety of special powers. Though he almost never leaves his lair, the tallest capacitower in Mainframe, he has the power to appear anywhere in Mainframe, instantly and without warning, in a vid-window -- a computer screen that simply opens in mid-air. And using the remote control that he always carries, he can directly control everything mechanical or electronic in the city (but not "living" things like Sprites). Megabyte also has the authority to assign jobs to all the ordinary Sprites in Mainframe, jobs which they do without

question, simply because that's their function in life: to do what the command.com tells them.

But because he's a virus, Megabyte's appetite for power can never be satisfied: it's *his* function in life to go on extending his power indefinitely. He craves power for its own sake, like an addiction. He's especially anxious to invade The Super Computer. It's so advanced that he doesn't understand how it works, so different from Mainframe that he can hardly conceive what it's like -- but he wants it. He's always trying bizarre experiments to try to get the modem port to open or to somehow establish contact with The Super Computer. These experiments are invariably gigantic failures, often with unforeseen consequences.

Megabyte isn't a traditional villain bent on conquering the world of Mainframe. He already runs the place. He's half corrupt politician and half mob boss, adept at every kind of intimidation and manipulation from violence to glad-handing. Hiding his vicious viral nature behind a suave English accent and an unctuous feigned concern for others (think George Sanders, with big, pointy teeth), he delights in humiliating his enemies and watching people squirm. But though he can be truly scary, there's something about his insatiable, frustrated ambition and the pettiness of his evil that makes him just a little bit pathetic, so that he comes across as threatening and funny at the same time. Funny, that is, if you don't live in Mainframe.

In short, Megabyte is a bully, a big coward (he's terrified of Games) who likes to frighten people and push them around.

Megabyte has a love-hate relationship with his "pet" null, **NIBBLES**, a sort of executive toy with an attitude. Nibbles is a cross between an ill-tempered lap-dog and a balloon. Megabyte loves to bend, fold, spindle, and mutilate him -- it's good for stress. Nibbles always bounces back to his original bulbous shape, unhurt despite the horrendous screeching noises he makes while Megabyte is "petting" him.

Like all nulls, Nibbles has a dangerous taste for energy. And since Bob is the most energetic Sprite in Mainframe, Nibbles is always trying to take a nip out of him.

DOT

Before Megabyte took over Mainframe, Dot was the computer's command.com. Although she remembers her former position, Dot isn't resentful or angry about the change of command. Like everyone else in Mainframe, she doesn't recognize Megabyte as a virus. She thinks he's the new command.com, here to take her place as she replaced the command.com before her. She may question or even oppose Megabyte's actions, but she simply can't conceive of trying to overthrow him.

However, being a former command.com does make Dot special. Megabyte can't assign her a job, because the only job she's programmed for is his. So Dot has gone into business for herself. She runs the Open Circuit Diner, across the street from Megabyte's capacitower, where you find the best fast food in Mainframe.

Her plans don't stop at the door of the Open Circuit. Dot is always thinking of new and better ways to do everything, new businesses to start, new ideas about how to reconfigure Mainframe. After all, as a former command.com, Dot has the ability to run the entire computer world as well or better than Megabyte. All she lacks is the opportunity. So far her plans have all ended in frustration: she can't get anyone else to cooperate. Innovation is something that the inhabitants of Mainframe have trouble understanding. And though they're used to being told what to do, they can only take orders from one command.com at a time, and right now that's Megabyte.

Dot is bright, energetic, fearless, sexy, and perhaps because of her former position, a bit vain. But she can also be distant, preoccupied, rather intimidating, a bit insensitive. She takes it for granted that people will do what she tells them, the way they used to. Though she isn't bossy or domineering, she *is* used to getting her own way. There's another thing about Dot that can be annoying: as a former command.com, she pretty much knows how to do *everything*. It can be hard to put up with somebody who's always right, especially when she isn't shy about saying "I told you so."

Dot has an air of cool emotional detachment coupled with an ironic, almost sarcastic wit. But she can surprise you with the sudden revelation of unsuspected feelings or a secret enthusiasm -- a passion for shoes, a life-long ambition to be a trapeze artist, a love of the electric guitar. Some day she may suddenly realize that she's in love with Bob... Hmm, love. That's a great feeling. If we could bottle that and sell it -- but first we'd have to build a bottling plant...

ENZO

Enzo is Dot's kid brother, a hyperactive twelve-year-old who's two pints of pure adrenaline crammed into one pint-sized kid. Think of Dennis the Menace -- at 1000 RPMs. He's a whirling bundle of misdirected energy. And what he's usually misdirected at is Bob.

Enzo doesn't just like Bob -- he wants to *be* Bob. He'd give his left node to come from The Super Computer like Bob, and he's always pestering Bob with questions about what it was like. But he doesn't just follow Bob around: he tackles him, and hangs on.

Enzo is the one person in Mainframe who thinks Bob is a hero. He's always following Bob into Game sectors and making a nuisance of himself with his bubbling enthusiasm and his complete lack of concentration, caution, or practicality. When Bob is trying to save a whole sector of the city, he has to take time to save Enzo. But she isn't. Far from thanking Bob for looking out for her little brother, Dot blames him for the fact that Enzo got into danger in the first place.

In terms of the computer, Enzo is a young copy.com program, whose function one day will be to make copies of files. No wonder he's so anxious to copy everything Bob does.

FRISKET

Frisket is a sometimes sweet and always dim-witted feral dog who has "adopted" Enzo. Around Enzo, Frisket is a real pussycat, but everyone else has to look out for his large, menacing metal teeth. Especially Bob, who, because he's from The Super Computer instead of Mainframe, just doesn't smell right to Frisket.

MIKE THE TV

Mike is the ultimate in live TV. He doesn't just bring the world into Bob's living room -- he walks into the living room himself and tells Bob what's showing on his screen, with the voice and mannerisms of an obnoxious, hyped-up, motor-mouthed emcee. And Bob can't turn him off, because the remote control ran away. All Bob can do is try to escape. It isn't easy, since Mike can follow him all over Mainframe. Bob never knows when Mike is going to appear and bombard him with news, talk shows, bad soap operas, and commercials, commercials, commercials.

HACK & SLASH

Hack and Slash were designed to be Megabyte's muscle machines. (Because they're "mechanical," Megabyte can turn them on and off -- make them appear and disappear -- with his remote control.) The bodies of Hack and Slash can change to bristle with weapons, like the liquid metal man in "Terminator 2." Unfortunately, they're so heavily armored that there isn't much room inside for things like brains. They have a combined IQ approaching that of a toaster oven. They're almost unbeatable in a fight, but laughably easy to confuse.

Hack and Slash are not only confused but confus*ing*. Megabyte has never bothered to learn which is Hack and which is Slash. Having them tell you which is which only makes it worse, since they have a habit of stepping on each other's dialogue:

SLASH: "I'm --"
HACK: "-- Hack. He's --"
SLASH: "-- Slash."
HACK & SLASH TOGETHER: "Transmission error."
HACK: "I'm --"
SLASH: "-- Slash. He's --"
HACK: "-- Hack."

Listening to them is like watching a tennis game. Even they find it annoying. Often they end up fighting each other.

PHONG

Bob's spiritual mentor, sort of. Phong is the oldest Sprite in Mainframe, left over from the days of IBM 360s. In fact, Phong was the original command.com, before the PC was updated to Dot. His years of experience have given him an eclectic wisdom which he dispenses while levitating Buddha-like in his rec room. Unfortunately, Phong's pithy pronouncements can be more than a little confusing, as if he were translating them, badly, from another language. Perhaps because he still thinks in Fortran.

Phong a champion Pong player in his youth. Anyone who comes seeking enlightenment has to beat him in a game of Pong before he'll share his wisdom. This is incredibly easy for Bob, who, since he comes from The Super Computer, is about ten times faster than Phong.

Phong is the only inhabitant of Mainframe who knows that Bob is telling the truth about human Users and computer Games.

HEXADECIMAL

Hexadecimal is another virus that has infected the Mainframe PC. She acts as a sort of female counterpart to Megabyte, the unofficial boss of the lowest levels of Mainframe, a dark and eerie place like the lowest levels of L.A. in "Bladerunner," infested with nulls. But unlike Megabyte, Hexadecimal wasn't programmed to take over the computer. She's only supposed to disrupt its functions. Her love is not power, but chaos. She's always coming up with schemes to make life in Mainframe more difficult. She would even destroy it if she could, knowing that it would be the end of her too, but unable to resist the temptation.

Hexadecimal has an array of masks with different expressions that she changes to suit her mood or, more often, the impression she wants to create. The masks also flatter her vanity, which is comically enormous. Normally she has a face that only a machine's mother could love, but with the addition of the masks she becomes exotically, strangely, sinisterly beautiful.

Hexadecimal sometimes tries to use that beauty on Bob, hoping to win him over as an unwitting ally in her schemes of disruption. Bob isn't interested, but he knows better than to come right out and tell her.

Like Megabyte, Hexadecimal also has a "pet," a computer mouse named **SCUZZY.** Scuzzy is the size of a dog, and rolls around knocking over things and tripping people with its long "tail," a cord plugged into the wall in Hexadecimal's lair.

CHARACTER RELATIONSHIPS

BOB AND MEGABYTE

Bob is the only person in Mainframe who knows that Megabyte is a virus and not a rightful command.com. Bob also understands that an insatiable lust for power is built into Megabyte's being. But he can't let Megabyte know that he knows -- that could be the end of Bob. He has to foil Megabyte's plans to invade The Super Computer without letting Megabyte know that he's fighting him.

But though he sees Megabyte as a villain and a menace, it would never occur to Bob to try to kill (or otherwise destroy) him. In the world of the computer, viruses are people too: Megabyte is as "human" as any other Sprite. As a Guardian, Bob is supposed to protect Sprites, not kill them. Even when he worked for the Port Authority, he didn't destroy viruses, but merely kept them out.

Megabyte regards Bob as a bit of a fool for his good nature, his concern for others, and his lack of ambition. But he's also jealous because Bob comes from The Super Computer, and because Bob is far more courageous than he is. He secretly feels inadequate around Bob, then exacts revenge for it by humiliating and manipulating Bob (like giving Bob a job as his doorman, with the sarcastic title "Head of Security"). But even this backfires, since Bob is for the most part cheerfully oblivious to humiliation. It drives Megabyte crazy that he can't crush Bob's spirit.

Megabyte would have no hesitation about getting rid of Bob, if it would serve his purposes. But what Megabyte really longs for is power over Bob: he wants cringing yes-men, not defeated enemies. Besides, he needs Bob to prompt him through the portal into The Super Computer. Another reason for Megabyte to resent Bob: because he needs him.

Bob is able to best Megabyte mainly because Megabyte's own inflated sense of self-importance makes it hard for him to realize when he's been out-smarted. And even if he did realize it, he'd never admit it.

BOB AND DOT

Dot is the most interesting and exciting woman in Mainframe. No wonder Bob is attracted to her. But he becomes tongue-tied whenever he's around her. Dot is so hard to read, that he's never quite sure how she feels about him. He can't decide if they have a love-hate relationship, or if she's simply indifferent toward him.

Dot is the one person in Mainframe that Bob would like to impress. In his dreams, he takes her back to The Super Computer with him and they live happily ever after. But he's afraid to tell her how he feels. At least at this stage, their relationship is just a friendship, though with an underlying romantic tension.

Dot is a practical woman, and she has good reasons for liking Bob: he's funny, well-intentioned, helpful, good-looking. But she doesn't see him as a knight in shining armor, even when he's wearing shining armor. She's too firmly rooted in the "real" world to take an interest in Game heroics, and she has no idea of Bob's secret conflict with Megabyte (and since she doesn't recognize Megabyte as a virus, she wouldn't understand the importance of what Bob is doing even if he tried to explain it). To Dot, Bob is just a nice guy who works across the street. But her feelings for him might blossom into something deeper, given time and the opportunity to see him in a new light.

Though there isn't any real difference in their ages (both are young, but not children), there is a real difference in apparent maturity. Because she's interested in adult things -- business, a career, and the Mainframe equivalent of good government -- Dot seems older than Bob, who's more focused on what interests kids: games, heroic deeds, having fun.

BOB AND ENZO

This truly is a love-hate relationship. Enzo loves everything about Bob, and Bob hates it. Enzo is like an obnoxious little brother, always tagging along, always getting in the way, causing trouble, smothering you with admiration when you don't feel you deserve it, oblivious to the things you're really proud of.

Bob is always trying to get rid of Enzo, inventing errands for him, making excuses about why he can't spend time with him. Enzo is completely unaware of how annoying he is. He's convinced that Bob likes him as much as he likes Bob. And maybe Bob does like him a little... Well, not really. But Bob feels an obligation to look out for Enzo and get him out of the trouble he gets into.

DOT AND ENZO

A typical big sister/little brother relationship. Dot orders Enzo around, often gets exasperated with him, rarely approves of what he does -- and is fiercely protective of him. Enzo chafes and complains under Dot's authority, but really only wants to please her.

DOT AND MEGABYTE

Dot isn't afraid of Megabyte or impressed by his bluster. But though she's convinced she did a better job as command.com than he did, it would never occur to her to challenge his authority or try to depose him.

Megabyte is secretly a little uneasy around Dot, because *he* knows that she should really be in his place. He treats her with condescending politeness, a feigned friendliness dripping with insincerity (he always refers to her as "my dear"). This is his way of exulting in her overthrow.

In emergencies, Megabyte sometimes goes to Dot for information. Since she knows how everything in Mainframe works, she makes the perfect research assistant.

MEGABYTE AND ENZO

Much to Bob's annoyance, there's one other person in Mainframe who excites Enzo's admiration. Megabyte! Enzo is taken in by Megabyte's bullying bluster and impressed by the trappings of power, without stopping to think about what Megabyte actually does with that power.

To Megabyte, Enzo is as interesting and engaging as a gnat.

ATTITUDES TOWARD THE GAMES

BOB always rushes into a Game sector as the Game cube descends, in order to help the Sprites trapped inside. But though he's concerned about the danger to others, once he "reboots" and starts playing the Game he secretly enjoys it. After all, it's just *fun* to be a fighter pilot or a jousting knight -- as long as you're winning.

MEGABYTE is afraid to participate in Games, but always finds a way to look cool while bugging out. But unless a Game involves him personally, he sees them as only a minor nuisance. He doesn't care if other people get crunched or gobbled, as long as there are millions of other Sprites around to control. In fact, he finds watching the Games on TV rather amusing. The only thing that would make him take Games more seriously, is if he became convinced that they somehow threatened his power.

DOT sees Games as a tremendous waste of time and effort. She keeps trying to think of a way to stop them, or at least give adequate warning that they're coming -- the way we might dream of averting hurricanes or predicting earthquakes.

ENZO loves Games as much as the kids who play them. Dot has warned him not to go into Game sectors because they're dangerous, but he often tries to sneak in anyway.

REBOOT CHARACTER DESIGNS

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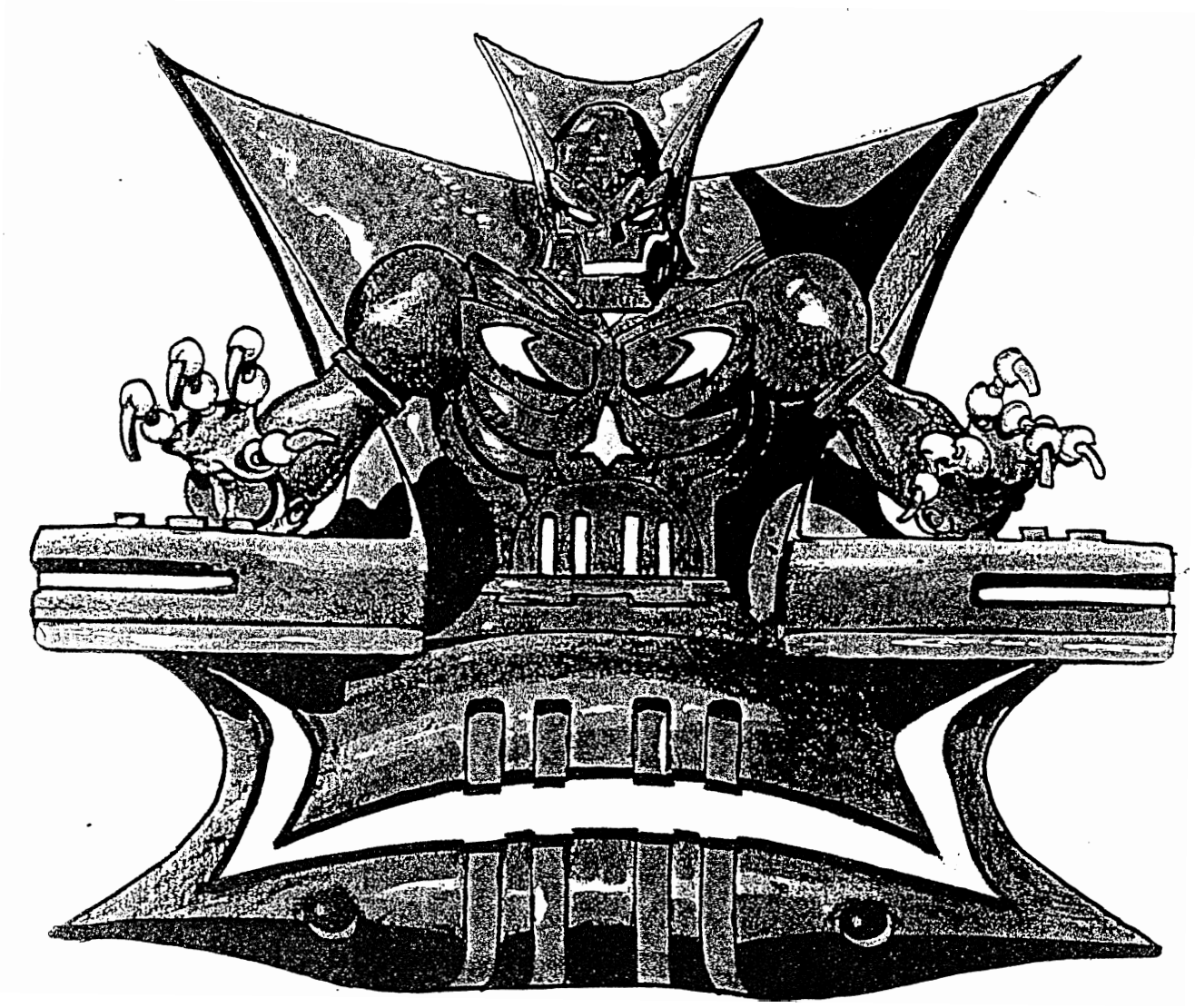
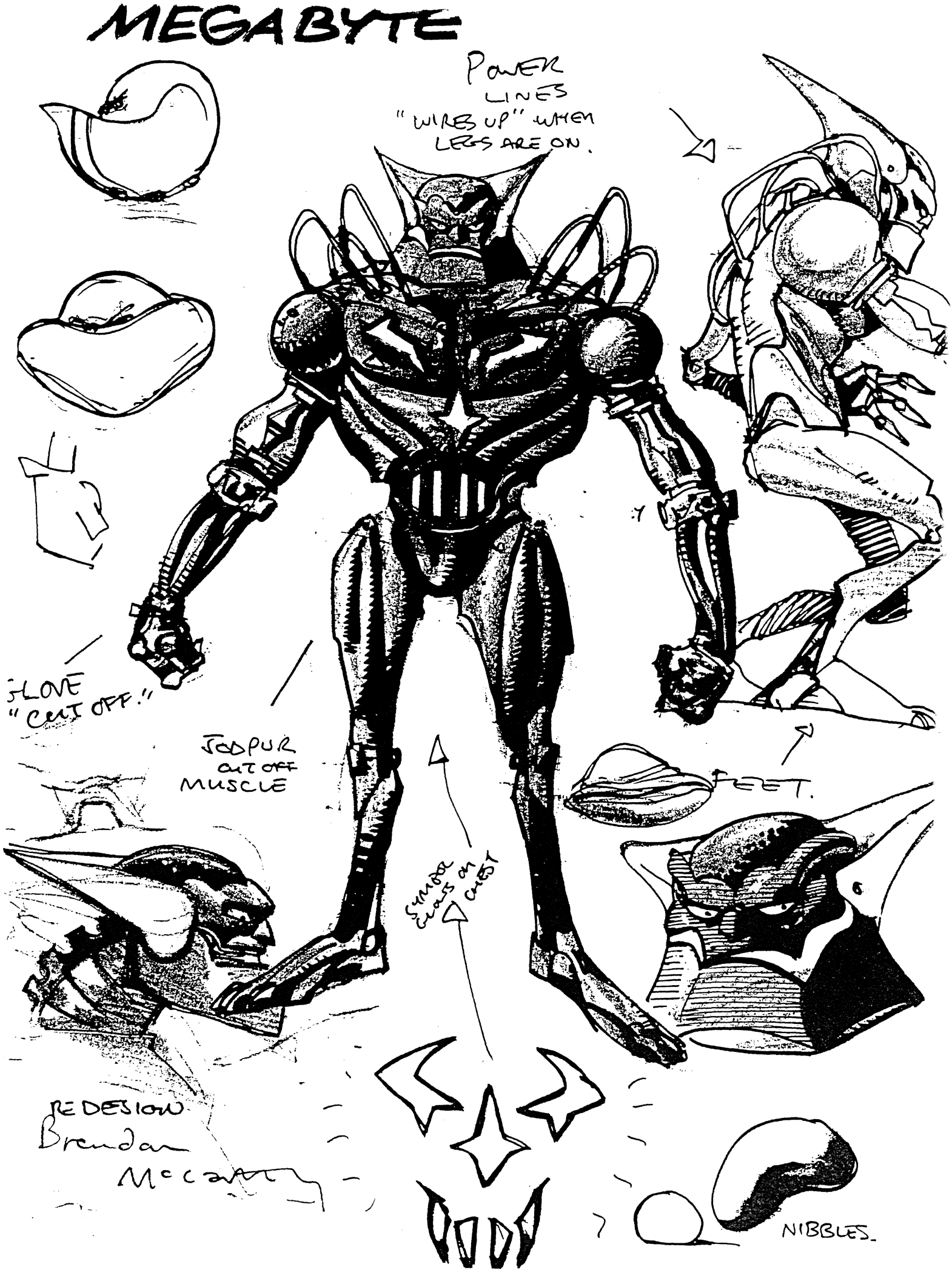
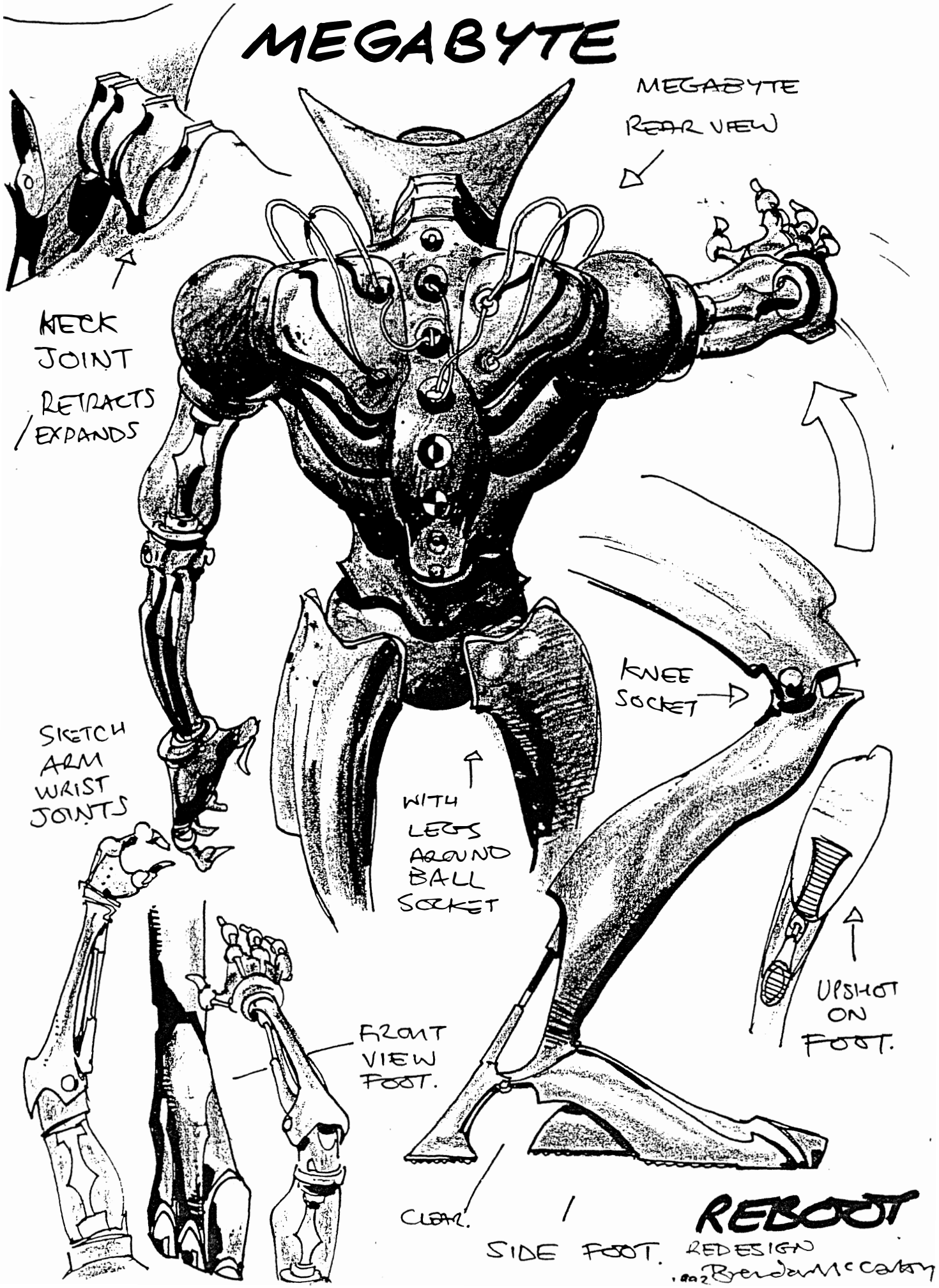


(—1) BIGNS BRENDAN McCARTHY 1993

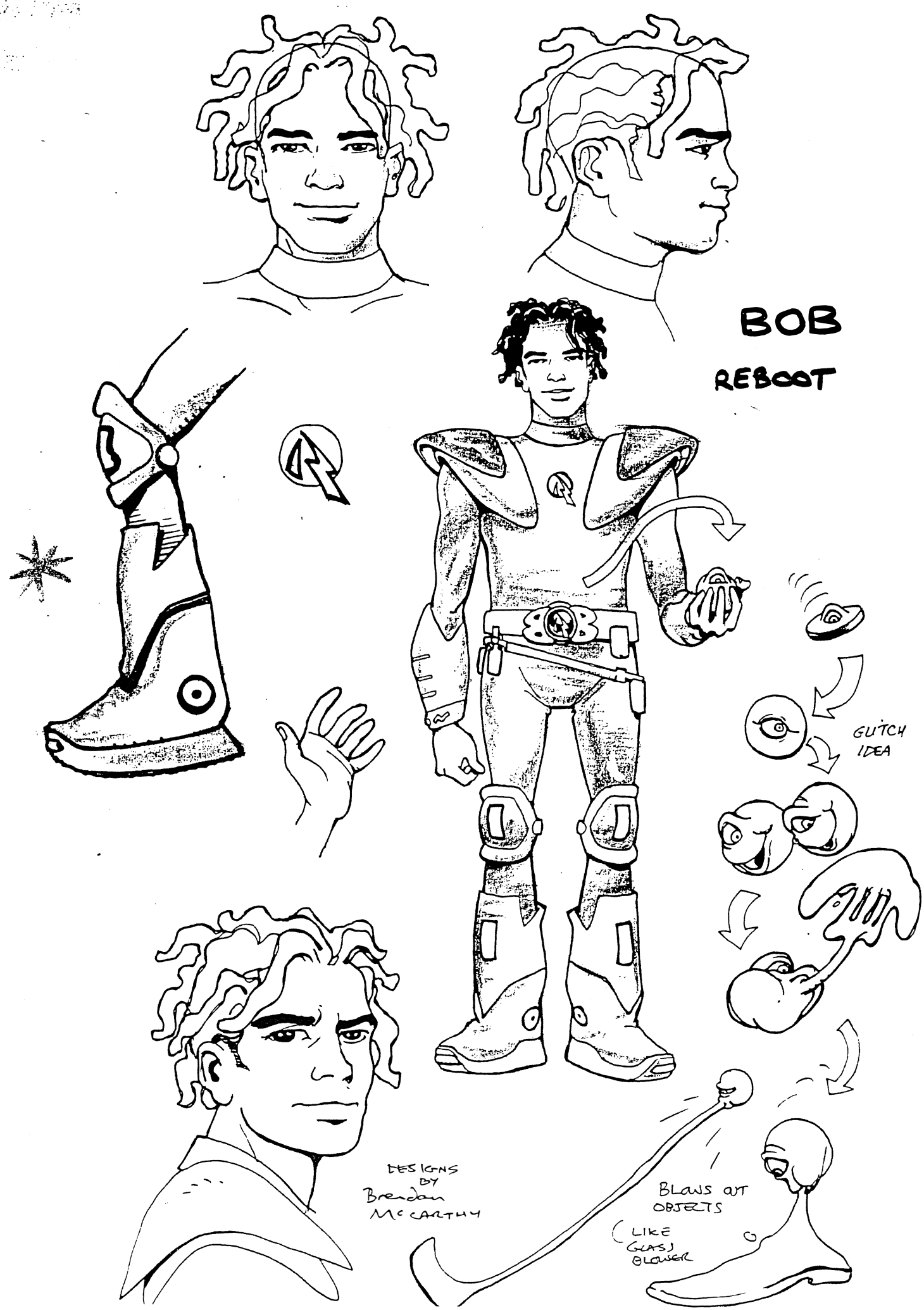
ROUGH SKETCH MEGABYTE

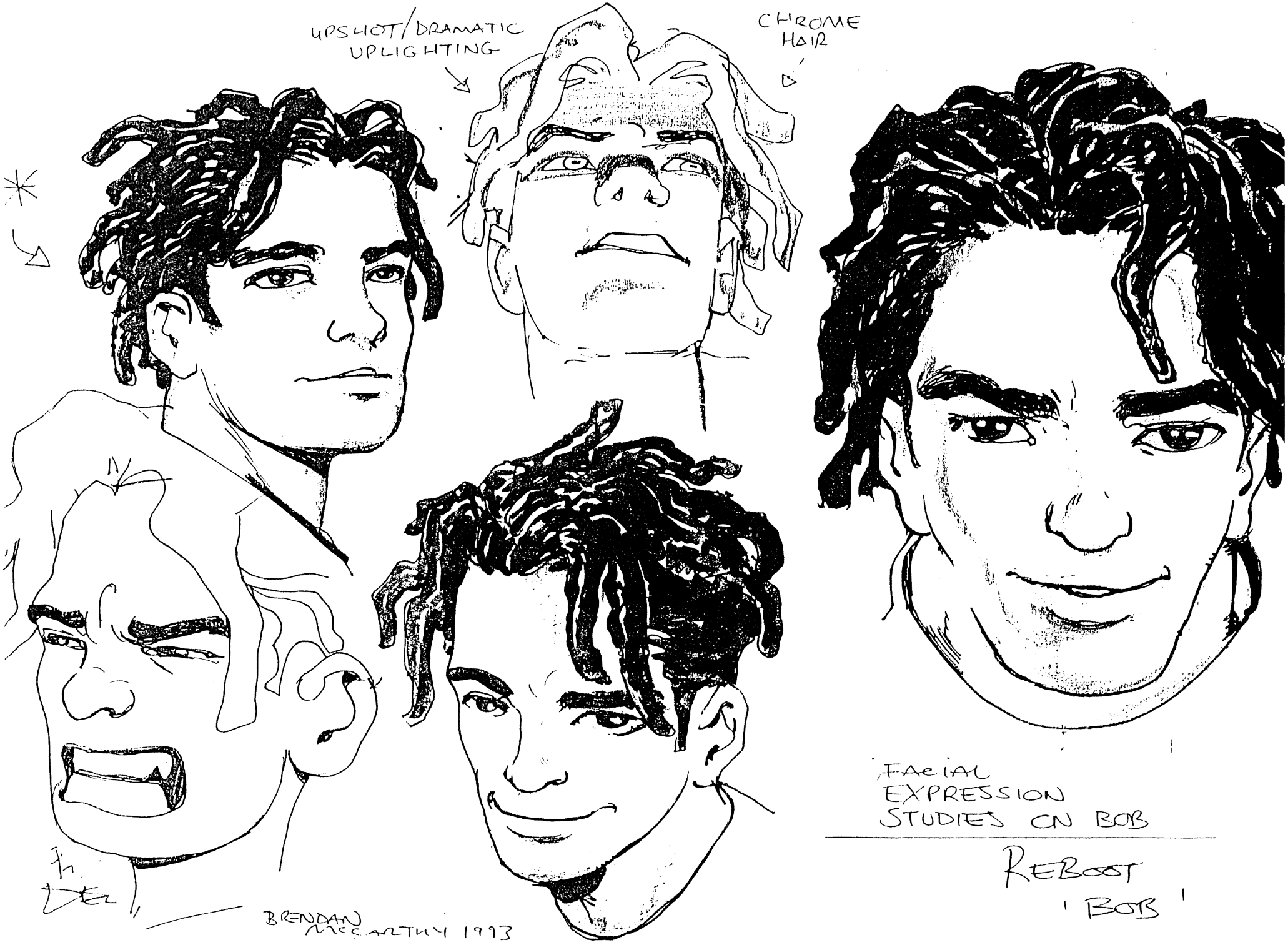

MEGABYTE
POWER LINES "WIRES UP" WHEN LEGS ARE ON.
GLOVE "CUT OFF."
JODPUR CUT OFF MUSCLE
FEET.
SYMBOL GLOWS ON CHEST
REDESIGN Brendan McCarthy
NIBBLES.

MEGABYTE



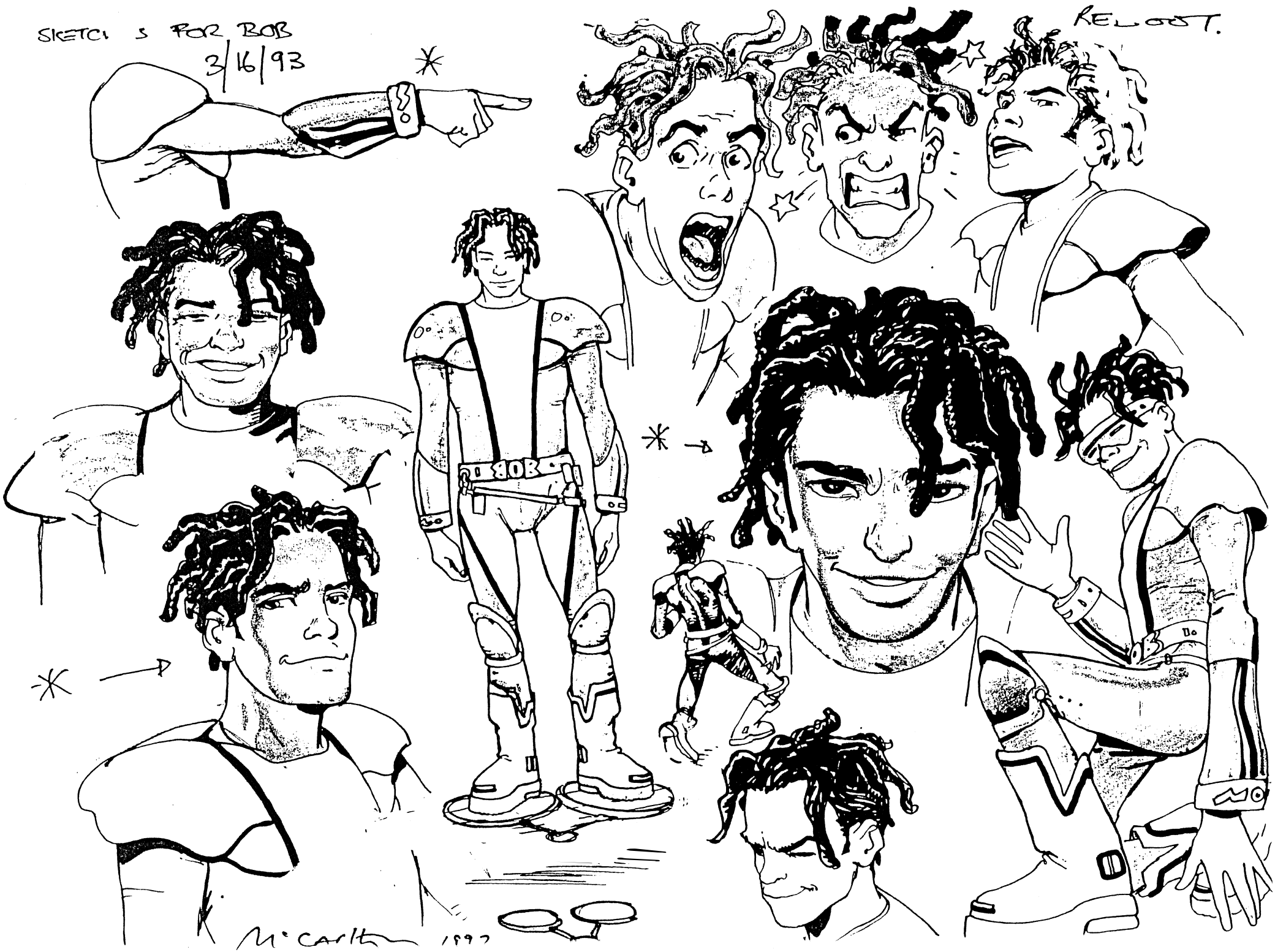
REBOOT


BOB
REBOOT
GLITCH IDEA
DESIGNS BY Brendan McCarthy
BLOWS OUT OBJECTS
(LIKE GLASS BLOWER



FACIAL EXPRESSION STUDIES ON BOB

REBOOT 'BOB'

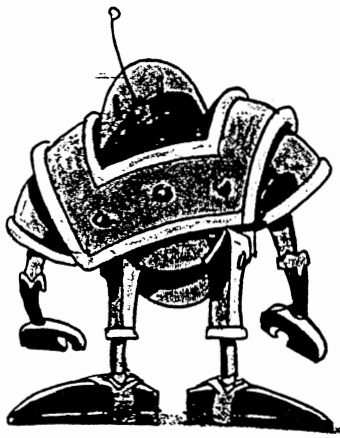

SKETCHES FOR BOB
3/16/93
REL00ST.
BOB
McCarlton 1993

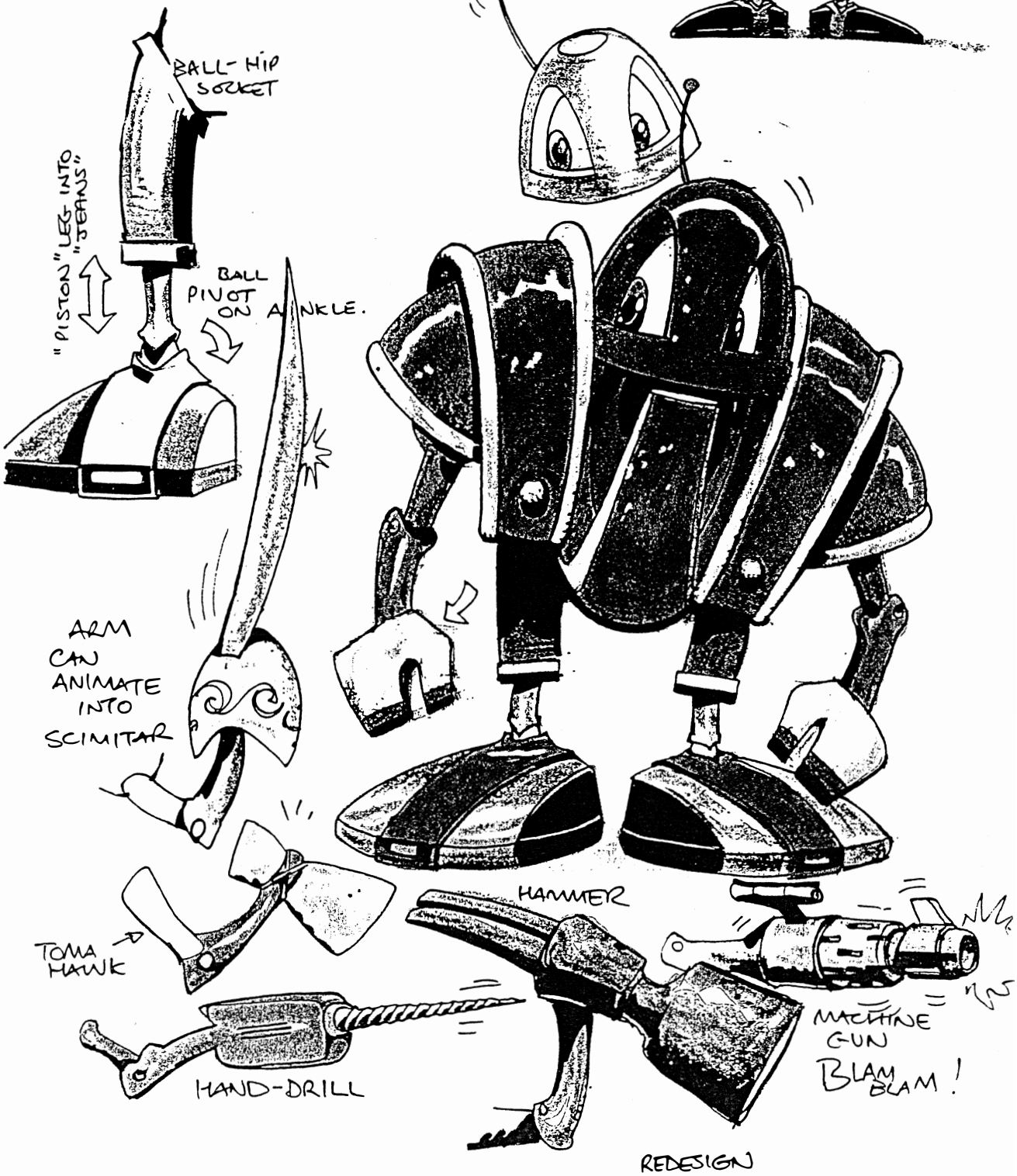
COLOR NOTE.

HACK 'N SLASH!

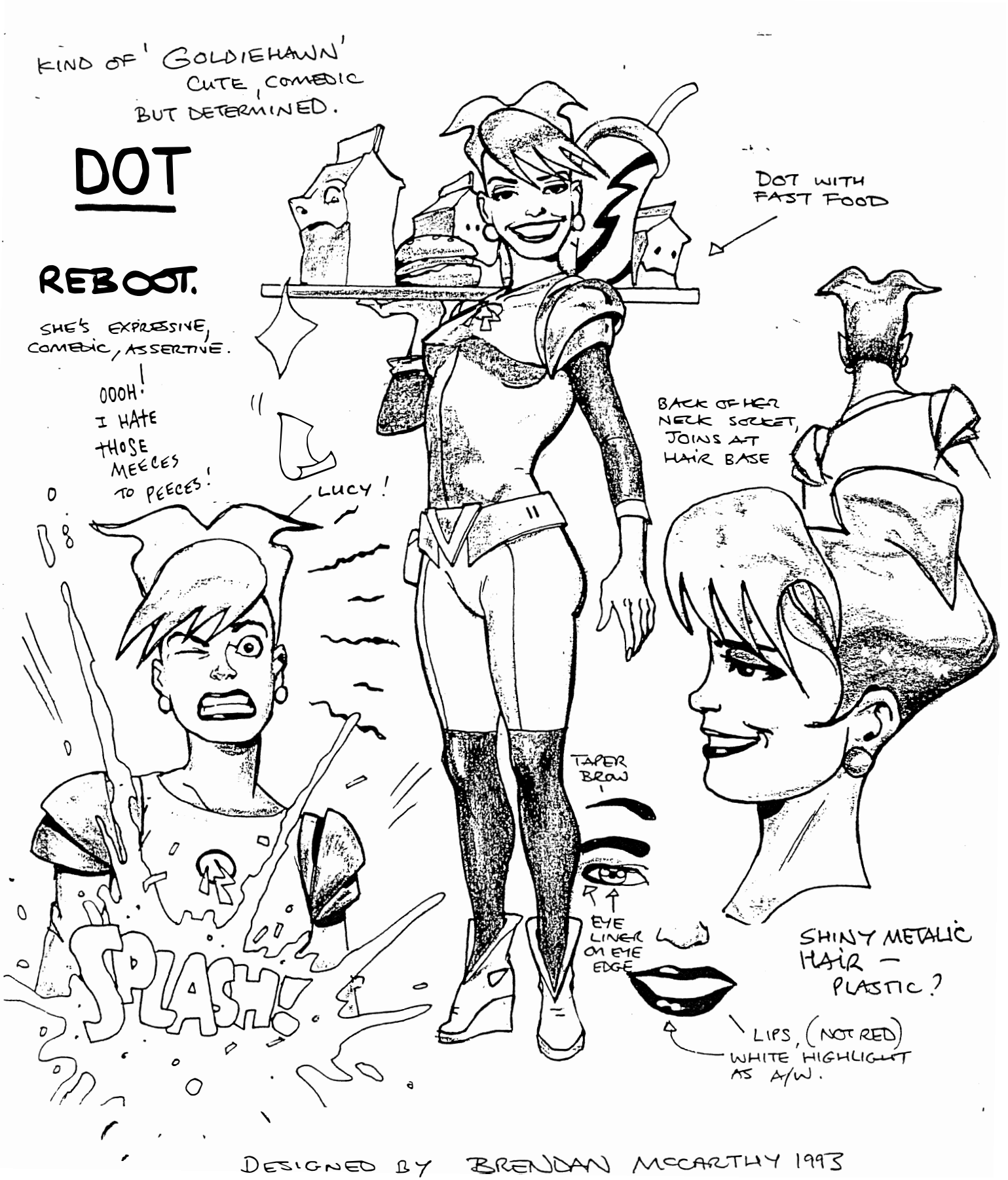
REBOOT

BLUE AND RED





REDESIGN
BRENDAN McCARTHY 1993

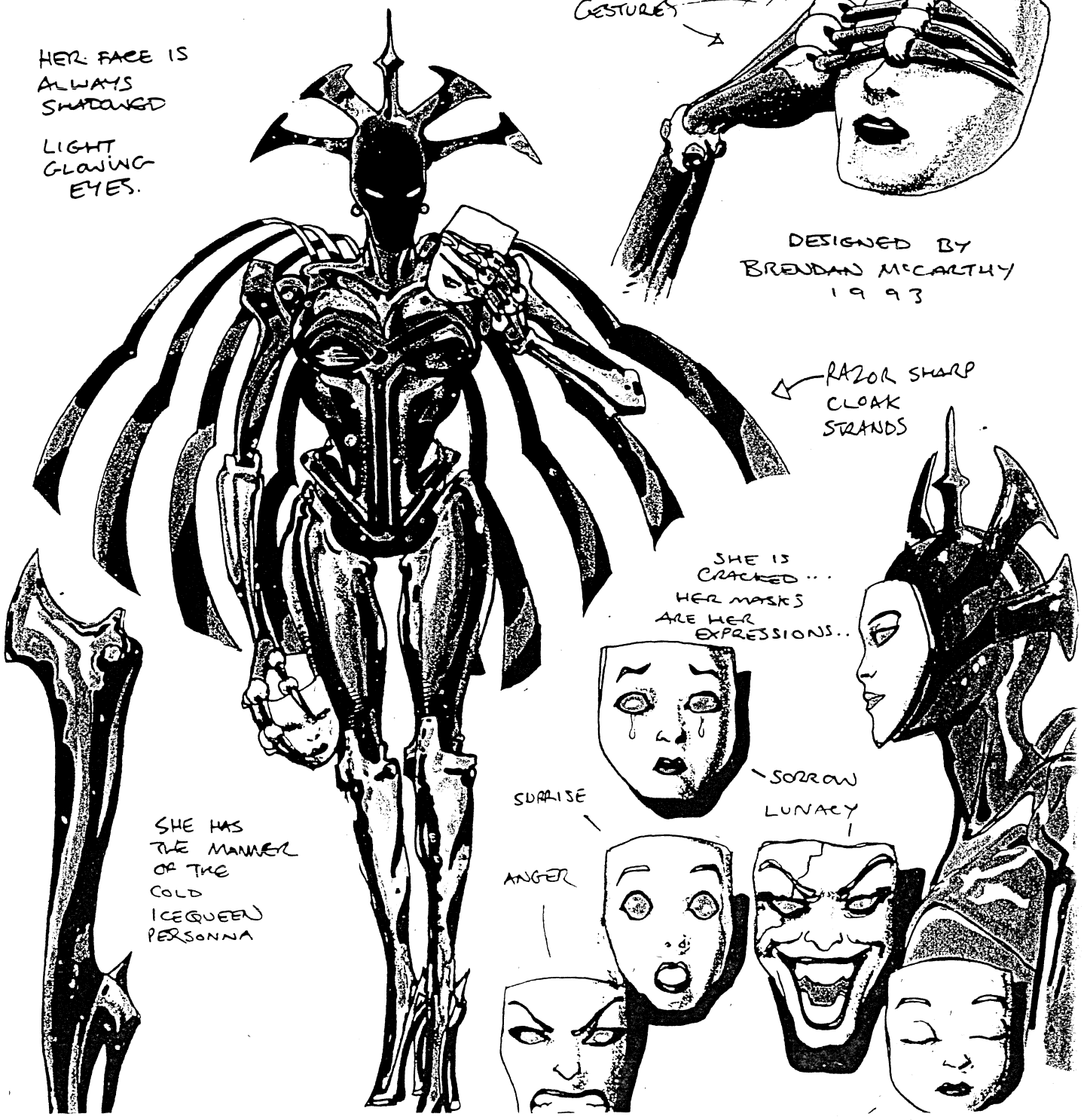

KIND OF 'GOLDIEHAWN' CUTE, COMEDIC BUT DETERMINED.
DOT
REBOOT.
SHE'S EXPRESSIVE, COMEDIC, ASSERTIVE.
OOOH! I HATE THOSE MEECES TO PEECES!
LUCY!
SPLASH!
DOT WITH FAST FOOD
BACK OF HER NECK SOCKET, JOINS AT HAIR BASE
TAPER BROW
EYE LINER ON EYE EDGE
SHINY METALIC HAIR — PLASTIC?
LIPS, (NOT RED) WHITE HIGHLIGHT AS A/W.
DESIGNED BY BRENDAN McCARTHY 1993

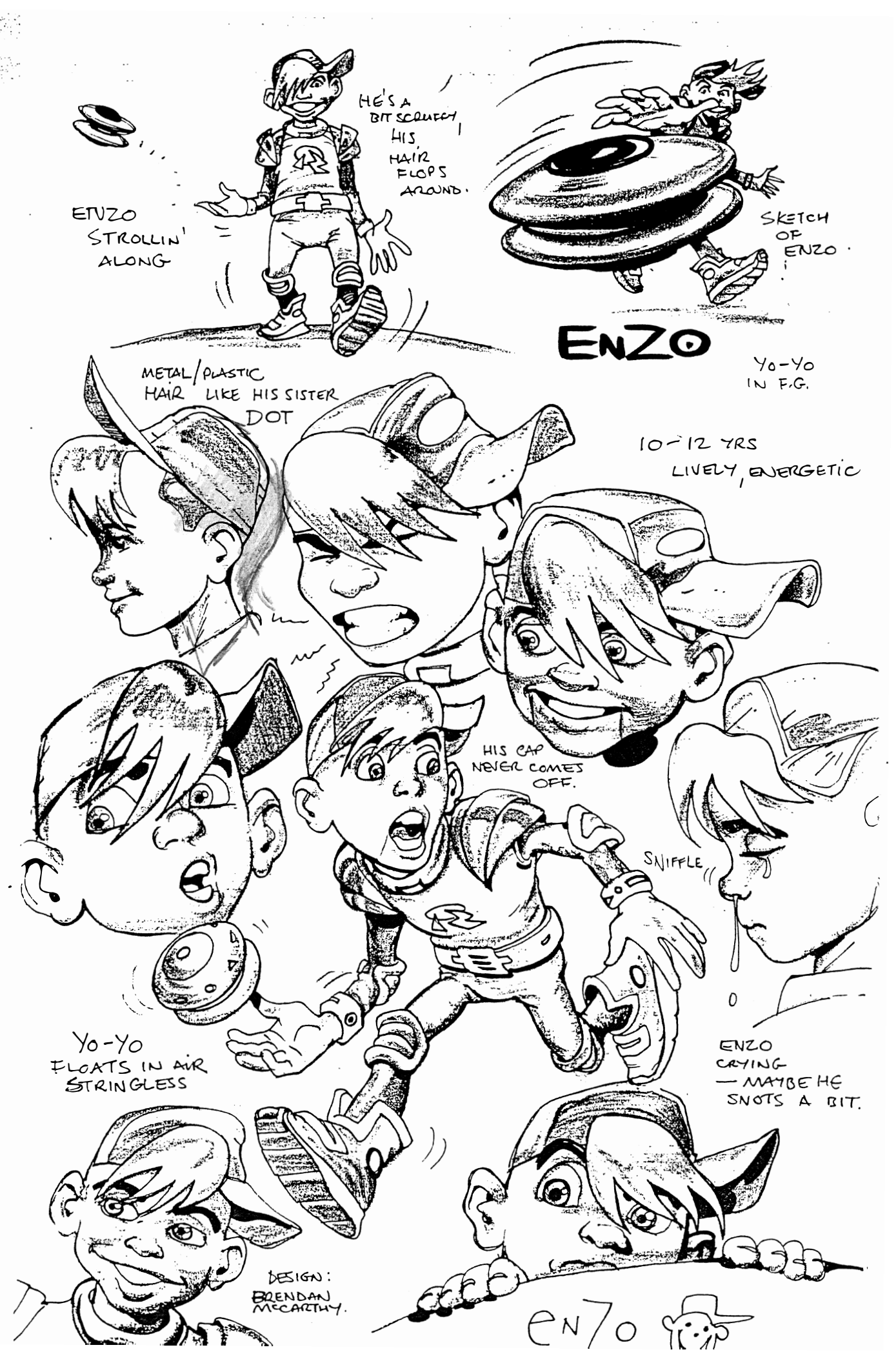
DOT
"GIRL NEXT DOOR" LOOK.
CURVED METALLIC HAIR
(PINK?)
COMIC EXPRESSIONS
SNIFF
SNIFF
LIP ACTION:
LIP SHOULD CONTAIN ARTIFICIAL WHITE HIGHLIGHT
(AS EYES)
BRENT ANDERSON

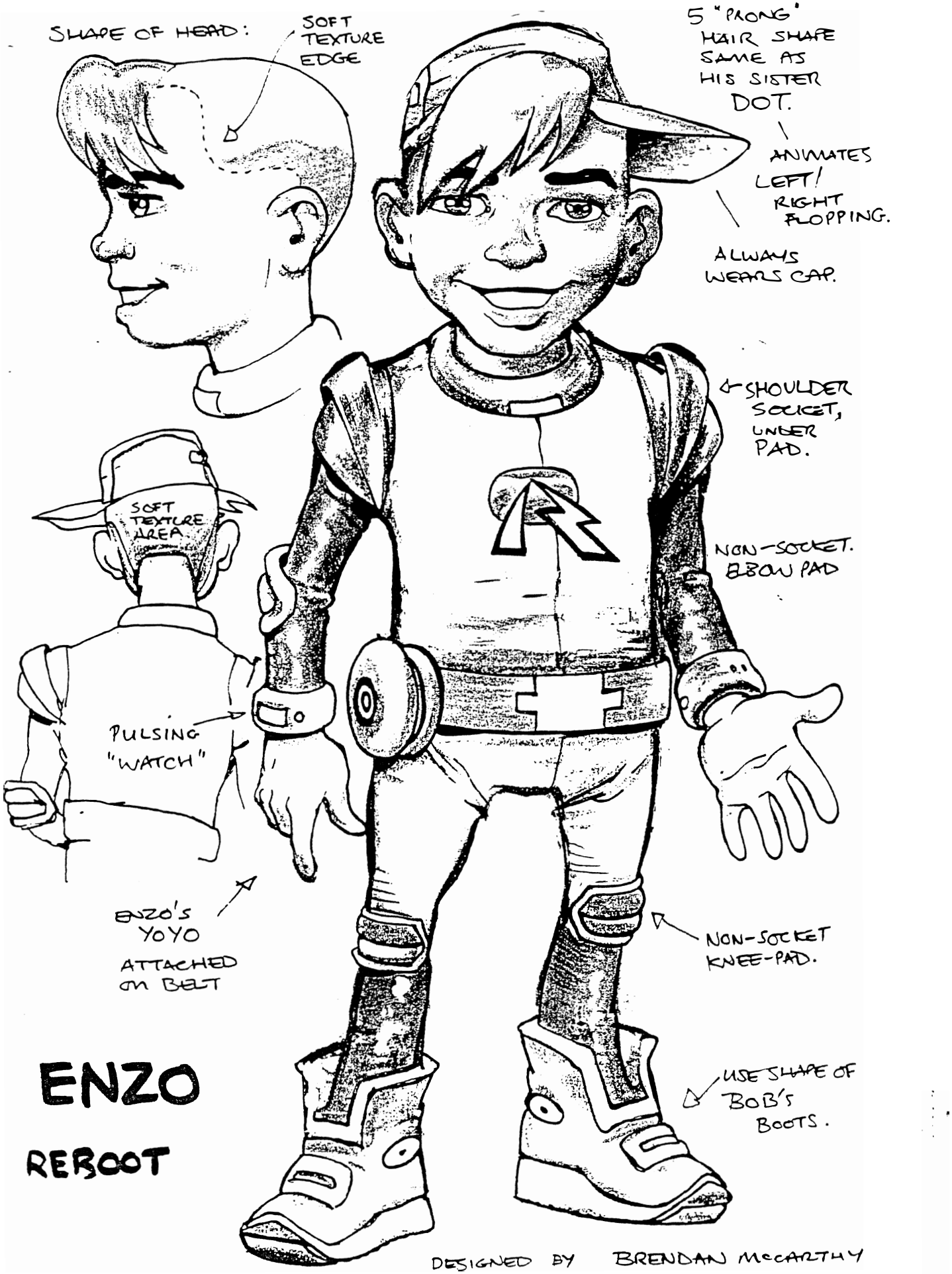
HEXGDECIMAL

Hexi

REBOOT




HE'S A BIT SCRUFFY, HIS HAIR FLOPS AROUND.
ETNZO STROLLIN' ALONG
SKETCH OF ENZO.
ENZO
Yo-Yo IN F.G.
METAL/PLASTIC HAIR LIKE HIS SISTER DOT
10-12 YRS LIVELY, ENERGETIC
HIS CAP NEVER COMES OFF.
SNIFFLE
Yo-Yo FLOATS IN AIR STRINGLESS
ENZO CRYING — MAYBE HE SNOTS A BIT.
DESIGN: BRENDAN McCARTHY.
enzo


SHAPE OF HEAD:
SOFT TEXTURE EDGE
5 "PRONG" HAIR SHAPE SAME AS HIS SISTER DOT.
ANIMATES LEFT/RIGHT FLOPPING.
ALWAYS WEARS CAP.
SHOULDER SOCKET, UNDER PAD.
SOFT TEXTURE AREA
NON-SOCKET. ELBOW PAD
PULSING "WATCH"
ENZO'S YOYO ATTACHED ON BELT
NON-SOCKET KNEE-PAD.
USE SHAPE OF BOB'S BOOTS.
ENZO
REBOOT
DESIGNED BY BRENDAN McCARTHY

'SKUZZY'

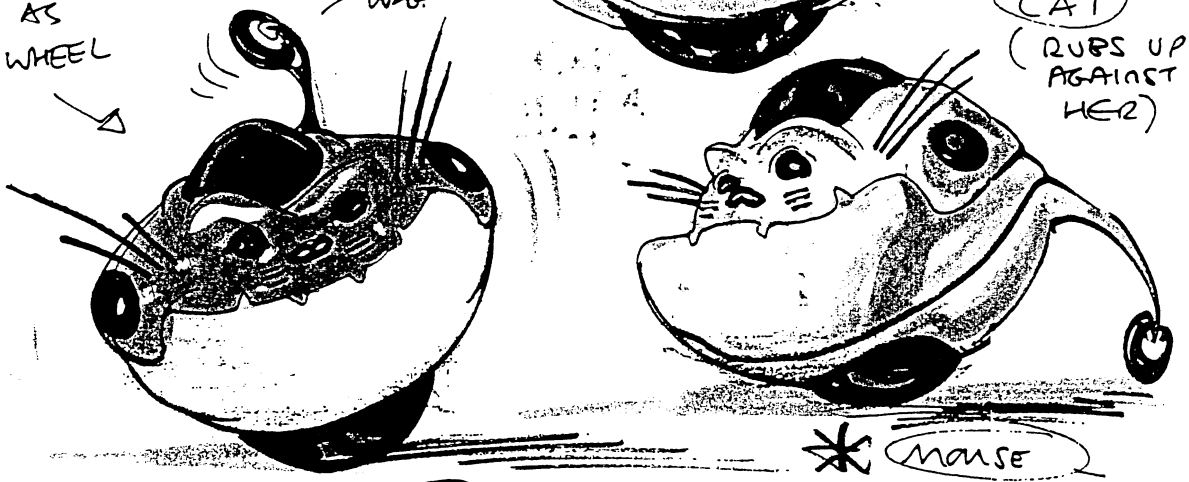
HEXADECIMAL'S PET WOTSIT.

HAS CHARACTERISTI OF A DOG (TAIL WAG)

CAT (RUBS UP AGAINST HER)

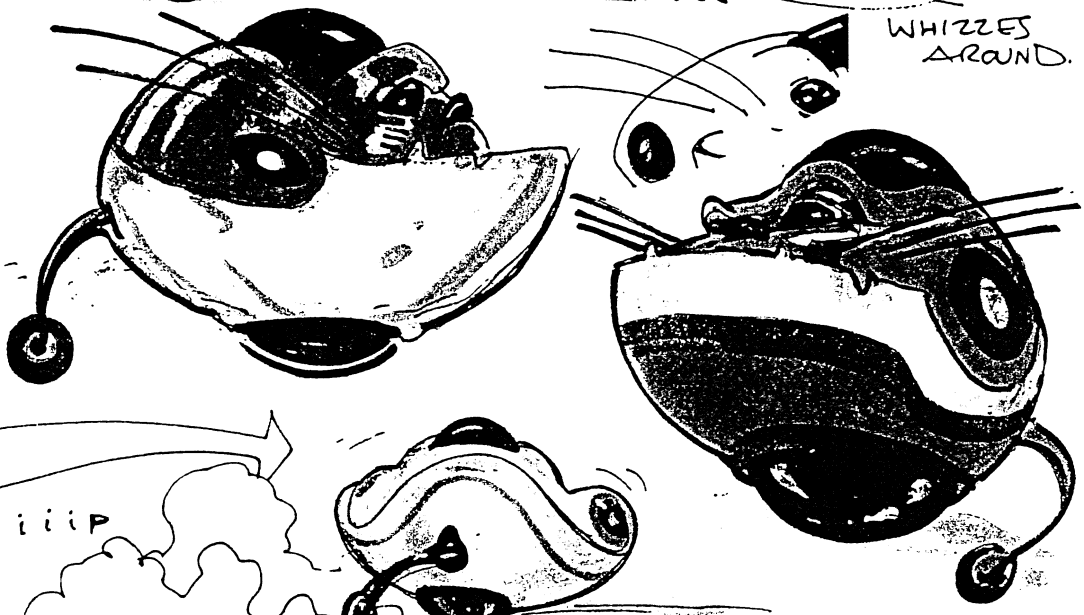
BACK TAIL AS WHEEL

CAN WAG.



* MOUSE WHIZZES AROUND.

BALANCE: RESTS ON TAIL



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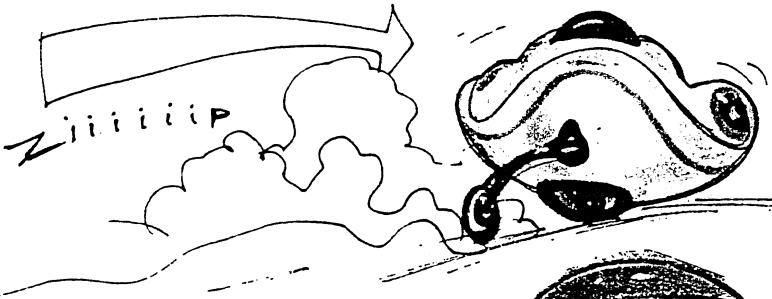
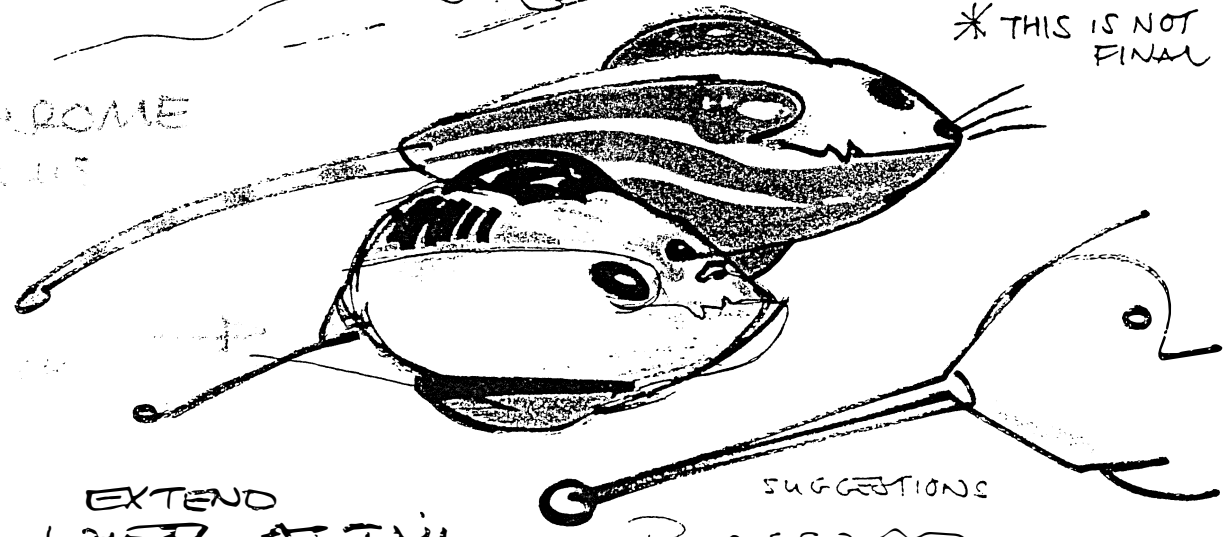


* THIS IS NOT FINAL

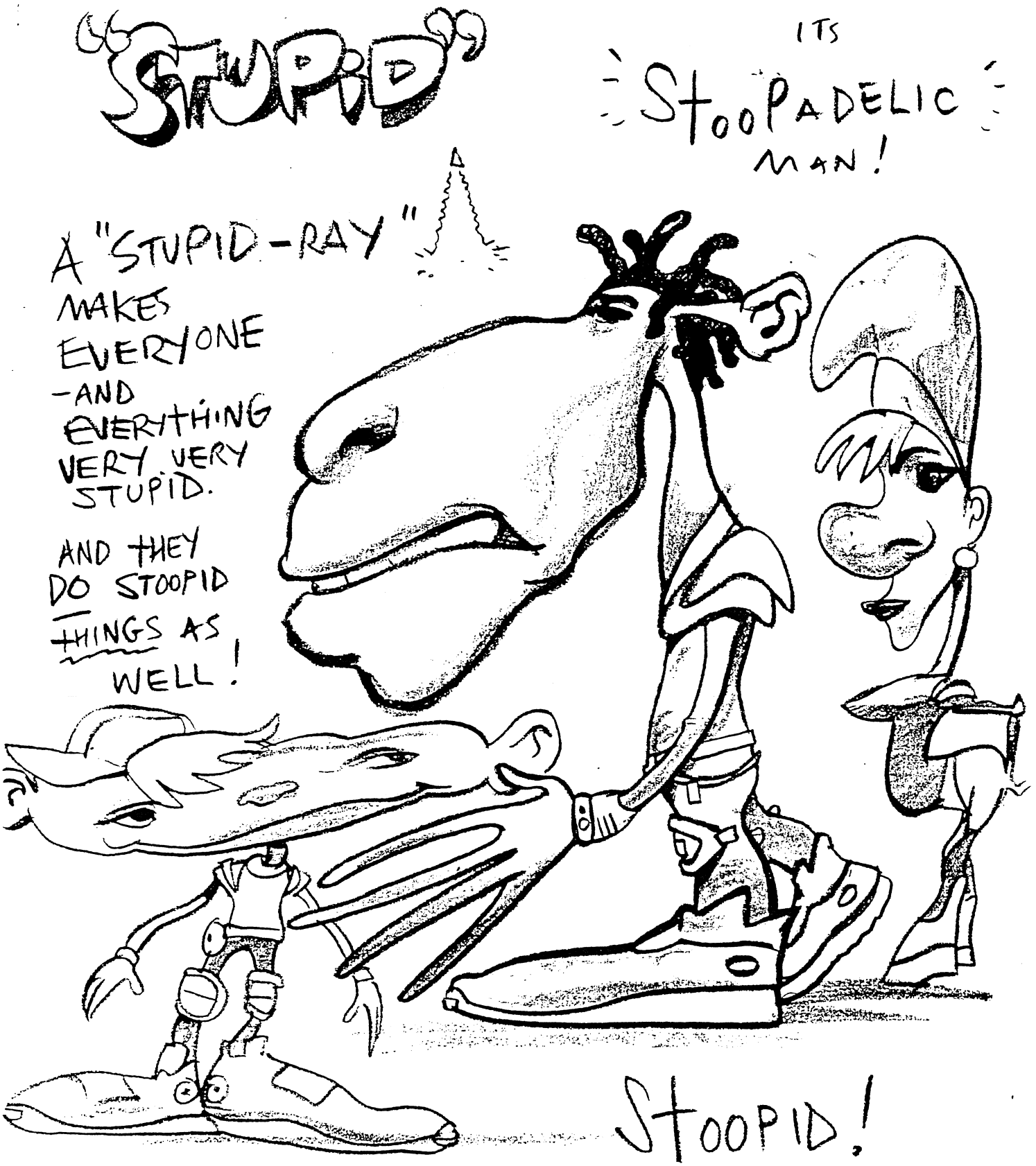
CHROME

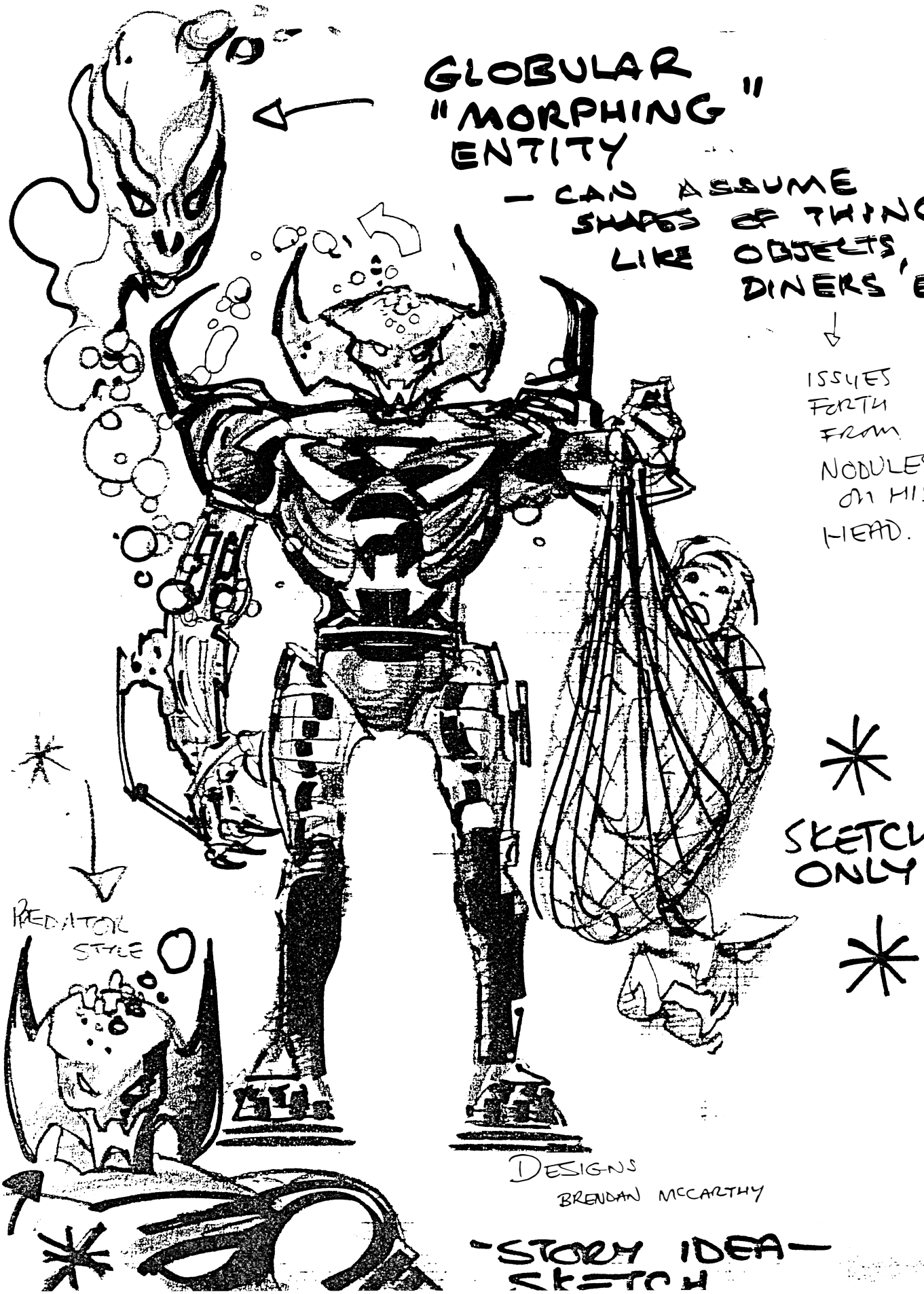


EXTEND WHEEL AS TAIL

SUGGESTIONS

RACCOON


STUPID
ITS
STOOPADELIC
MAN!
A "STUPID-RAY"
MAKES
EVERYONE
-AND
EVERYTHING
VERY VERY
STUPID.
AND THEY
DO STOOPID
THINGS AS
WELL!
STOOPID!


GLOBULAR "MORPHING" ENTITY
- CAN ASSUME SHAPES OF THINGS LIKE OBJECTS, DINERS ETC
ISSUES FORTH FROM NODULES ON HIS HEAD.
SKETCH ONLY
PREDATOR STYLE
DESIGNS
BRENDAN MCCARTHY
-STORY IDEA-
SKETCH

REBOOT PREMISES

"RACING THE CLOCK"

Using enormous tongs and working from behind lead shielding, Megabyte conceals a glowing, white-hot "delete command" inside a statuette of Phong with a clock in his belly. When the clock reaches zero, the delete command will go off, deleting everyone nearby. Megabyte giftwraps the figurine as a present for Hexadecimal -- a way to get her out of his hair once and for all.

Megabyte tries to think of the perfect person to deliver the deadly package, someone Hexadecimal would never suspect ... Bob. He calls Bob in and explains that he wants Bob to deliver the present, but that Hexadecimal should think the package is from Bob, not Megabyte. He wants it to be a surprise. But when Bob leaves, we see that someone has been spying on Megabyte: Hexadecimal's mouse, Scuzzy. Hexadecimal knows Megabyte's plan.

Bob stops off at the Open Circuit on his way to Hexadecimal's lair. Enzo can't resist peeking inside the package when Bob isn't looking. Noticing that the clock is off, he tries to set it -- and accidentally erases a wall of the diner. But when Dot asks him what happened, Enzo denies knowing anything about it.

Bob delivers the package to Hexadecimal, and says it's from him. Hexadecimal says that she has a present for Megabyte. She wraps the delete command bomb in a different box and gives it back to Bob.

Meanwhile, Dot has cleverly gotten the truth out of Enzo: that Bob is carrying a delete command, and that Enzo peeked at it. But Dot knows from talking to Bob that he doesn't know what he's carrying. She and Enzo set out to warn him.

Dot and Enzo catch up with Bob as he's on his way back to Megabyte's headquarters with Hexadecimal's "present." But a Game cube descends on them before Dot can warn Bob -- a Grand Prix racing game.

Bob ends up at the wheel of a Formula One racer, unaware that inside the package beside him is a ticking time bomb that will go off before the race is over and delete him forever. Dot and Enzo have to commandeer a vehicle and stop them any way they can, while Bob is determined to stop for nothing and win the race.

A good introduction to all our characters: Megabyte as villain, Bob as dedicated competitor, Hexadecimal as Megabyte's rival. Especially strong on Dot-Bob relationship, contrasting their romantic antagonism with her desire to save him. Good introduction to Games, plus a ticking clock.

From a technical point of view, the computer will allow us to "direct" the racing sequence with camera angles that would be impossible to achieve, even in the most expensive live action film.

2.
"REMOTELY POSSIBLE"

Tired of not being able to turn off Mike the TV, Bob buys a remote control at a pawn shop -- unaware that it's Megabyte's all-powerful remote control, lost by Hack and Slash, who are frantically searching for it. When whole sectors of the city start shutting on and off, Bob realizes that the remote is controlling all of Mainframe. As Phong explains to Bob, power corrupts, and absolute power makes you very popular. Megabyte, Hexadecimal, and even Dot all have ideas on how to use the power of the remote control. But disaster threatens all of Mainframe when the remote control falls into the hands of Frisket, who buries it, and Enzo, who has no idea of its incredible power.

An ensemble episode showcasing all our characters' conflicting ambitions. Explores how Mainframe works and the nature and scope of Megabyte's power.

3.
"THE QUICK AND THE FED"

While trying to repair her vacuum cleaner, Bob accidentally erases Dot, rendering her transparent. Bob is distraught and arouses Megabyte's wrath by ignoring his job to concentrate on finding a cure for Dot before she realizes that he is to blame for her predicament.

Bob's efforts are interrupted when a Dungeons-and-Dragons-style Game descends on Mainframe. Bob finds himself competing with a mysterious Black Knight to be the first to save a "damsel in distress" whom he assumes to be Dot. In the end he discovers that the "damsel" is Enzo, while Dot has cured herself and become the formidable Black Knight.

Establishes Dot as a strong, independent character and reveals Bob's feelings for her. Introduces popular Dungeons and Dragons game where jousts will be fought on flying dragons, with all the excitment of an aerial dog fight. This episode should show off the computer's "modeling" and lighting capabilities. Look for realistically murky shadows in the bottomless pit and torchlight reflecting on shields and swords as they collide in battle.

4.

"THE FAMILY THAT BYTES TOGETHER, FIGHTS TOGETHER"

Megabyte's Motherboard and his rivalrous siblings (Kilobyte, Gigabyte, etc.) come to Mainframe for a visit. We discover that Megabyte is the "failure" of his appalling family, who never miss a chance to reinforce his feelings of inadequacy.

Megabyte takes his family deep-sea fishing, with Bob along to drive the boat. Megabyte tries to impress his family by catching "Big Blue," a giant computerized Crayfish that swims in the A sea and the D sea. But he fails: more humiliation. Then the situation gets worse. A Game cube descends, transforming Megabyte's yacht into a giant warship and the sea into a giant numbered grid dotted with ships. It's a game of "Battleship."

Megabyte's family watches helplessly -- blaming Megabyte, of course -- as one grid square after another is obliterated. It's only a matter of time until Megabyte's flagship is sunk, unless Bob can execute a daring plan to get off the ship, penetrate the barrier that separates the hostile fleets, and call in bombing coordinates. But Megabyte has one more demand: Bob has to make it look as if Megabyte himself has won the Game, so his family will be impressed.

Explores the depths of Megabyte's character, beneath his villainous facade. Plus an unusual Game with big visuals and great comic potential.

5.

"MISSING LINKS"

Eager to win Dot's respect, Bob tries to explain that Games are calamitous, and that he only enters Games to help people in danger. Dot is unimpressed. She regards Bob as little more than a thrill-seeker, and a poor role model for Enzo.

The next time a Game cube descends, Bob bravely enters the Game, and finds himself trapped in a terrifying, life-threatening game of -- miniature golf. Instead of wearing armor and swinging a sword, Bob finds himself in plus-fours and white shoes with cleats. After what he's told Dot about how dangerous Games are, he finds the experience humiliating. Especially when Dot beats him by a stroke.

As "days" go by, the golf Game descends again and again. Word spreads that it's a pleasant, relaxing experience, and people begin flocking into the Games. People start getting custom-made clubs. Dot turns pro.. Mike the TV tries to televise the Games, but keeps falling asleep. Even Megabyte starts going into the Games, taking Bob along as his caddy.

Dot organizes a tournament so that she can win prize money. The next time a Game descends, half of Mainframe crowds into it, either to play in the tournament or to watch. Instead of golf, it's a new Game, "World of the Dinosaurs," a struggle for survival in the Jurassic Age. But only Bob realizes it. Everyone else thinks the monsters pursuing them are the same as the decorative dinosaurs on the miniature golf course. Bob has to save people who don't want to be saved, armed only with a set of golf clubs.

"Boy Who Cried Wolf" quality makes clear Bob's status as an unsung, unappreciated hero. Extremely comic situations, plus the appeal of dinosaurs.

6.

"BOB IS MY CO-PILOT"

Megabyte accesses Mainframe's Telephone Directory (inhabited by walking, talking phone numbers) in an effort to find out how to call the Super Computer and modem himself to it. Bob follows Megabyte into the Directory and manages to erase the number before Megabyte can find out what it is. But Bob accidentally strands himself in the Telephone Directory.

While Bob is trying to find a way back to the main part of Mainframe, a Game cube descends on Mainframe, and Enzo is trapped inside a jet fighter game. Bob ends up phoning Enzo and talking him through the ferocious air battles of the Game's highest and most difficult level.

A strong Enzo-Bob relationship story, plus a painful lesson in cooperation, as our take-charge hero is forced to depend on Enzo.

7.

JITTERBUG

Hexadecimal rents a hall to indulge her secret ambition to be a singer. Then she rents an audience. The concert turns disastrous when she hits high notes that shatter things -- not just glasses, but buildings, cars and people. Hexadecimal is humiliated.

Meanwhile, Bob actually gets Dot to go out on a date with him, to see the Jitterbug, a hip little musical program, that literally has the nightclub where it performs jumping. Anxious to impress Dot, Bob takes her backstage to meet the Jitterbug -- and accidentally touches him. Bob begins jittering. When Dot gives him a peck on the cheek to say goodnight, *she* begins jittering. Soon the epidemic of movement has spread by touch through most of Mainframe. And it isn't just people jittering uncontrollably: even buildings are dancing wildly.

Bob seeks help from Phong, and they discover only a specific musical note can set up an opposite vibration and still the jittering. But the only one in Mainframe who can produce that note is Hexadecimal. Bob has to find some way to get her to sing again.

"Shattering" and "jittering" effects are special capabilities of the computer producing unique visuals never before seen in animation. Music-driven episode also provides an interesting look at Hexadecimal's character.

8.
"DOT MATE TRICKS"

Hoping to impress Dot, Bob tries something never before attempted. He enlists the aid of a walking, talking box named MkDir to preserve something from a Game when its cube disappears: the jewel-laden treasure chest from a pirate game. But MkDir accidentally saves not only the treasure but a pirate ship and its larcenous crew. Soon a group of bored binomes don eye-patches and pirate hats, board the ship and join the pirates in becoming the scourge of the A Sea and the D Sea. And it's all Bob's fault. Worse, when Dot disappears, Bob becomes convinced that she's been kidnapped by the pirates.

Bob sets out to stop the pirates. But he has to rethink his plan to lure the ship over the edge of the Sea and into oblivion when he discovers that, far from being kidnapped, Dot has become their captain. To Dot, piracy is just another business. When Bob tries to make her understand the true nature of piracy, he's forced to confront the the fact that he himself "stole" the pirate treasure from the game.

Dot character story with an interesting moral dilemma for Bob. Exaggerated swashbuckling pirate action played for fun.

9.
"A MIND IS A TERRIBLE THING TO WASTE"
(A.K.A. "STOOPID")

Always anxious to emulate Bob, Enzo tries to adopt Phong as his mentor. But Phong will only dispense wisdom if you can beat him playing Pong -- which Enzo can't do. Frustrated, Enzo turns to an unscrupulous Tutorial program who promises to make him smarter than everybody else in Mainframe.

It works -- sort of. Instead of making Enzo smarter, the program makes everybody else in Mainframe stupid. And every*thing*, including buildings. And they don't just act dumb, they *look* dumb.

Enzo is "Home Alone," forced to run a Mainframe populated with incredibly dopey characters and deal with crises far beyond his own experience.

Uses "stupid" effect, a computer distortion of appearance that turns still-recognizable heroes into bizarre comic characters. Strong appeal to children, as young Enzo becomes the only "adult" in the equivalent of a world full of dopey little brothers and sisters.

10.
"WHEN GAMES COLLIDE"

Annoyed by the constant intrusion of the Games, Megabyte experiments to find a way to make them go away. But instead of getting rid of Game cubes, Megabyte's efforts only scramble them, mixing two Games together in bewildering confusion. "World at War" and "World of the Dinosaurs" combine to become "World of the Dinosaurs at War."

Bob finds himself trapped in a bizarre World War II game where pterodactyls have propellors and fire missiles, tanks have armor plates and spiked tails, and tyrannosauruses have tank turrets where their heads should be. Not only does he have to deal with totally new creatures, he has to survive in a Game that has no rules, one that he doesn't even know *how* to win.

The computer allows bizarre combinations of creatures to look and move as realistically as ordinary characters, creating startling visual effects. Takes Games one step further, presenting Bob with an even greater challenge than usual.

11.

"PREDATOR 3, BOB 0"

A Game cube descends on Mainframe -- but no one trapped inside knows it. Bob, Dot and Enzo are inside a "Predator" type game, in which a creature capable of camouflaging itself perfectly will gradually hunt down everyone trapped inside. The creature can even duplicate entire locations, actually becoming Dot's diner or Bob's apartment to convince the characters inside that the Game is over.

Frustrated by this game that won't go away, Megabyte sends Hack and Slash into the Game cube to help Bob. The Predator makes very short work of them. His refusal to accept a creature more powerful than he is and his need to keep Bob around as the key to the Super Computer combine to force megabyte to an extreme decision: he enters the Game cube himself to help defeat the Predator.

Makes use of camouflage software as visually exciting as the special effects used in the "Predator" movies. Interesting personal dilemma for Megabyte.

12.
"CITY CRITTERS"

A plague of energy-eating nulls overruns Mainframe -- a major problem, since energy is what everything in Mainframe is made of. Megabyte, who's always expanding Bob's job description, recruits him as a combination pied-piper and trail boss to round up the nulls and drive them back into the dark and gloomy off-line sector where nulls come from.

Meanwhile, Megabyte's pet null Nibbles escapes from Hack and Slash while they're null-sitting and joins the "herd" of nulls that Bob is gathering. Afraid to tell anyone what has happened but equally afraid of what Megabyte will do if Nibbles is consigned to the oblivion of the off-line sector, Hack and Slash secretly try to sabotage Bob's null drive until they can separate Nibbles from the rest of the herd. It could take awhile -- since all nulls look exactly alike!

Hack and Slash story, with spectacular visuals: unlike regular animation, the computer can create "crowd scenes" of hundreds, even thousands of fully animated nulls. Showcases the lower, seamier, "Bladerunner" sectors of Mainframe.